

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 05630 131246Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5360

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS AND FUTURE
OF LAOS

1. IN INTERVIEW WITH JAPANESE JOURNALISTS, AUGUST 10, PRIME MINISTER DECLARED THAT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO LAO PARTIES HAD MADE PROGRESS BECAUSE OF IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS MADE BY BOTH SIDES. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE ACCOUNT, PRIME MINISTER PREDICTED THAT PROBLEMS REMAINING COULD BE SETTLED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ONE OF THESE PROBLEMS, HE ADDED, CONCERNS BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE ZONES CONTROLLED BY THE PARTIES WHOSE FORCES ARE DISPERSED THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

2. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT COULD BE FORMED SOON, BUT EXPLAINED THAT THE LAO PROBLEM IS A "COMPLEX PROBLEM," AND THEREFORE IT MUST BE SETTLED WITHOUT HASTE SO THAT THE NATION WILL FINALLY HAVE A REAL AND PERMANENT PEACE. ONCE THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS INSTALLED, THE COUNTRY MUST NOT BE DIVIDED IN ANY WAY.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER OBSERVED THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL MUST BE ABLE TO TRAVEL FREELY THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 05630 131246Z

IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR TASKS. THE POPULACE, HE ASSERTED,

MUST ALSO BE ABLE TO TRAVEL BECAUSE NO AREA SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS BELONGING TO EITHER ONE OF THE PARTIES.

4. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS ABOUT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE DIVIDED EQUITABLY SO THAT ALL AREAS OF LAOS CAN BE TRULY DEVELOPED. ASKED ABOUT WHAT THE JAPANESE MAY DO TO ASSIST, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT, WHILE LAOS WOULD NEED AID FOR AGRICULTURE AND RECONSTRUCTION, HE WOULD ALSO SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM JAPAN TO HELP THE LAO GOVERNMENT SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF DEMOBILIZED SOLDIERS.
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